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FOREIGN NEWS ON CITRUS FRUIT

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THE MARKET FOR CITRUS FRUIT IN CARDIFF

The city of Cardiff and the coal mining communities surrounding it are constant consumers of as much fresh fruit as industrial conditions will permit. Apples and oranges are the forms of fruit most generally used, with moderately priced oranges from Spain meeting the larger share of the demand. The consumption of oranges is confined to no one class, although the bulk of the business is done in ordinary grades at moderate prices. There are large sales of cheap oranges for the preparation of the marmalade so widely used in British homes, and some are sold for preserving.

Cardiff receives fully 90 per cent of its oranges direct from Spain according to Courtland Christiani, American Consul at that port. The fruit is shipped on vessels which carry coal to Spain, the return load resulting in very favorable freight rates. While Spain provides all of the ordinary grades and some fruit of higher quality, Jaffa supplies the choicest fruit. Jaffa oranges are received as a rule through importers at London or Liverpool.

A notable exception was a shipment of about 13,000 cases received on March 13, 1925, direct from Jaffa. This was the first direct shipment to Cardiff and caused much favorable comment. The auction at which it was offered drew dealers from throughout Great Britain. The returns from the sale averages about \$3.85 per case, the cases containing from 144 to 250 oranges, according to grade. Many cases were examined and repacked for inland transportation with little or no bad fruit being found. The fruit was handled by the Great Western Railway, operating the Cardiff docks, the ship being unloaded in eight hours, at the rate of 1,682 cases per hour. Approximately half a million oranges were included in the shipment.

Small amounts of California oranges are received in Cardiff via London, but it is said that Cardiff does not identify the United States with quantity production of oranges. In order to compete, American oranges must retail from four to six cents each. The Consul suggests that the best type of orange to meet the Jaffa fruit would be the seedless, thin skinned Florida orange. The great bulk of Spanish oranges are shipped on the commission basis and since the market is organized primarily to handle fruit in that manner, prospective American shippers in all probability would be forced to accept the same terms as do the Spaniards. In spite of unfavorable criticism of selling on consignment, it appears that growers are satisfied with the returns made by Cardiff brokers, who have a reputation for fair dealing.

There are no direct imports of grapefruit into Cardiff, the small quantities required being secured, a few cases at a time, from London. The fruit can be obtained all the year, however, at 8 to 18 cents each retail. Fruit at that price comes from Jamaica as a rule, and is said to be small, with a thick skin and with little juice or flavor. Cuban fruit is occasionally offered and is of higher quality and price, but Florida fruit rarely appears. Consumption is limited to the wealthy classes.

Attempts have recently been made through advertising, to encourage the eating of all fruits, especially oranges, and it is thought that American fruit exporters might gain from these efforts, by further advertising and the placing of quality products on the market at prices comparable with citrus from other sources. It is evident, however, that as long as American oranges and grapefruit are forced to maintain their relatively high price levels, the opportunities at Cardiff will remain very limited.

